

## IS IT POSSIBLE TO SAVE RUSSIA STILL?

In the 60s, many of us thought that if we had only to achieve the right to say what we wanted, and to nominate any candidates in the elections, then all the country's troubles would be behind us. We have completely underestimated the scale of the destruction - spiritual and material - that has taken place in our country. It was necessary to foresee that the collapse of the totalitarian system would inevitably be associated with a new catastrophe.

Now this catastrophe has broken out, and it is not clear how to stop it. Shops are empty, crops are not being harvested, the threat of strikes that could turn the economy into a heap of ruins looms, death is approaching the country, pre-thunderstorms of interethnic clashes flare up everywhere, the number of refugees is approaching a million.

But the most terrible sign is the disintegration of the country. Many republics have declared their sovereignty and refusal to obey the laws adopted in the center. In the 60s of the last century, an attempt to secede the southern states in the United States was thwarted by a bloody war, and the fight against the separatists was led by Abraham Lincoln, the famous ideologist of democracy.

No, in such a form as now, we no longer form one country. What kind of relations will develop between the countries that emerged from the wreckage of this crash? Will they be able to create an alliance like the European Community, or at least maintain friendly relations? God grant, but there is little hope. Conflicts have already begun and are still being held back by troops from the center. There are questions about borders. How many will agree with the borders drawn for reasons incomprehensible now by Lenin's, Stalin's or Khrushchev's fingers? Estonia is already making claims to the Leningrad and Pskov regions. And in Estonia itself there are areas almost entirely inhabited by Russians. The new states will not be nationally homogeneous, and the soil for national strife will not diminish.

Over the millennium, our ancestors created a unique country that united more than a hundred peoples, where the path to the ruling class was open to Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, Jews, Tatars, Mordvins, and where, thanks to this, a beautiful culture, valued by all mankind, arose. For all the cruelty inherent in human history in general, this country did not destroy the national individuality of the peoples inhabiting it. Even all the current outbursts of national passions are a recognition of the merits of that former state. Here in the United States there is no "problem of the North American Indians" - once a multi-million people. This is perhaps the most effective example of a "final solution" to the national question. The peoples of our country were on the verge of death only after the seventeenth year, which affected almost everyone. We have no reason to be ashamed of the state that our ancestors began to build in the 10th century and finished in the 19th century. But now, as it seems, the forces supporting him have been weakened to the limit, and the forces of disintegration have taken the upper hand. We must admit this reality.

However, the disintegration of the country does not stop at the borders of the 15 republics, it goes deep into them. Abkhazia declared itself independent in Georgia, Gagauz and Russian-Ukrainian Transnistria in Moldova.

This process is most dramatic in Russia proper - the RSFSR. Bashkiria, Tataria, Karelia, Udmurtia, Khanty-Mansi, Komi declared independence. Even regions and districts declare independence, talk about special money for one city, start economic wars between neighboring regions. Will it be possible to defend the integrity of Russia? - this is the most pressing question now. How it is decided depends not only on the fate of Russia, but also on the fate of other republics: this will affect the whole world.

The general reason for the disintegration process is not the rise of national feelings. For example, in the Komi Republic, the majority of the population is Russian. But they are talking seriously about the independence of Siberia, and there - the Far East: this can no longer be explained by national separatism. No, we are experiencing illness. The disintegration of the body is a sign of a decline in strength, not a rise. Apparently, here hatred for the "center", as the source of all evil, and the fear of an impending catastrophe, the hope of surviving it "separately" are mixed here.

What happens if the process of Russia's disintegration cannot be stopped? It will be necessary to break the ties that have sometimes formed for many centuries, to cut them alive. A multitude of small, torn apart by disputes, rather hostile to each other than close-knit, formations will be defenseless against any pressure: economic, military. Cheap labor, pumping out rich subsoil, transferring hazardous industries that are unacceptable at home, burying hazardous waste - will be an irresistible temptation for foreign companies. The division of the spheres of influence of the USA, Japan, Germany and China will begin. The "Balkanization" of Russia will completely upset the world balance of power and will be the greatest danger for the whole world.

Therefore, it seems to me that everyone who wants to save our country from complete collapse should unite around one goal: to prevent the final disintegration of Russia. Is there a force capable of doing this? If there is such a force, then there is only one - the Russian people. Neither economic nor geopolitical interests will create a healthy state. It should be based on national unity, reinforced by a common culture, the faith of the fathers and a common historical destiny. But it is the Russians who make up the overwhelming majority of the population of the RSFSR. Why, if sometime in the future the peoples that make up our country come together again, then this will be possible only around the Russian trunk.

But is this power real? The spirit of the Russian people is crippled, suppressed by continuous persecution. They began from the very 17th year, when the word "patriot" and "counterrevolutionary" became synonymous. Lenin, Stalin, Zinoviev, Bukharin were unanimous in the struggle against "Russian great-power chauvinism." Enmity and suspicion of Russian national feelings were hammered into their heads and were often absorbed unconsciously. And now we have to read about "Russian fascism" (who saved the world from fascism?). Even AD Sakharov reproached Solzhenitsyn that his

call to Russian patriotism was "from the arsenal of semi-official propaganda." The word "Russian" began to be perceived with apprehension, as if it had been politically compromised.

How many organizations have emerged recently that cautiously call themselves "Russian" (avoiding the dangerous word "Russians"). So no people can exist! And the Russian people still exist and have the right to discuss their future, talk about their interests, and protect Russians living in other countries. And to talk about Russia, a Russian country inhabited mainly by Russians, united by this Russian part of its own, on whose shoulders therefore the main burden of historical responsibility falls. They talk about Estonia as a country of Estonians, although there are fewer reasons for this - their share in the population of their republic is much smaller than the number of Russians in Russia. Of course, this special responsibility of the Russians must be combined with a full awareness of the significance of the fate of other peoples inhabiting Russia, with a heart open to their problems,

The weakening of Russian consciousness often leads to its distortion. One of the most dangerous distortions is that Russians sometimes hope to find an ally in the party and state apparatus. This is a tragic mistake! The apparatus, as it is now, will never come to the aid of the Russians, it will try to use them for its own purposes, and even compromise the connection with it and alienate many.

The same distortion is the use of the terminology of internationalism, hopelessly compromised in Afghanistan. Usually it looks like an embrace extended to a nation that (at least in the face of its leaders) decisively does not want to embrace us. Russians find themselves in an unworthy, ridiculous position. But we are strong enough to defend our own, Russian (and not "international") interests, and we have every moral right to do so.

Particular clarity must be made in relation to the party. There are hardly two answers to the question of the party's historical responsibility. The party that operated from 1898 to the present day, which came to power through revolution and civil war, never allowed the free expression of the will of the people, is undoubtedly responsible for what happened as a result of its rule. But what follows from this in practice? Most of the current party members have nothing to do with the tragic episodes of its reign (bearing only moral responsibility - after all, they voluntarily joined it). You cannot erase 20 million party members from life, especially when among them are many of our best engineers, scientists, artists, and writers. The party must find some reasonable place in the new way of life. Finding him is, of course, the business of the party itself. But it seems to me that two conditions are necessary for the Russian forces to consider the question of any cooperation with the party. The first is her open admission of her historical guilt. The second is its proclamation of a new hierarchy of values. It is necessary to state unequivocally that the party has one main goal: the salvation of the country and the people. Everything should be subordinated to this goal. This is what they did in Bulgaria: after changing its name, the party put forward the slogan "Interests of Bulgaria first of all" - and won the elections. Unfortunately, we have not heard such

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Which way of life should Russia choose now - socialist or capitalist? This is the question that, with its false statement, clouds heads and creates grounds for contention. Once the ideas of "socialism" and "communism" meant a call to ignite the whole world with the fire of the proletarian revolution. Now, it seems, no one thinks about it. What is the reality behind the expression "socialist choice"? Only a grandiose, centralized, centrally controlled economy, which is functioning worse and worse and with which we do not know what to do. In our conditions, the alternative "socialism" - "capitalism" is scholastic. We face not an ideological, but an economic problem. Private property has always existed - right down to the most primitive societies observed by ethnographers. She gives a person the right to choose, making decisions on their own responsibility - makes economic life interesting and creative. On the other hand, now, it seems, there is no country where property rights would not be limited by the state: government orders, taxes, antitrust laws, duties, economic bans, etc. And in our conditions, the absence of such restrictions will cause unemployment, impoverishment, mass strikes, chaos.

So the real problem is not the choice between socialism and capitalism, but the definition of the border - how much private property is allowed and how to limit it. It is wonderful that the peasants can get ownership of the land. But are there many peasants ready for this? For so long, all the strong and initiative strata have been knocked out in the countryside that now, perhaps, very many will prefer the protection of the collective farm and the state farm. Collective farms must also be protected from state dictatorship and robbery (the sale of super-expensive, often unnecessary equipment). All these are questions not of the choice of one principle, but of the ability to find the life boundaries of the application of different ones. And success here is not determined by ideology, but by what kind of people will lead. What is needed is not theorists who have been promoted by works on developed socialism, especially those who have already proved their abilities by planning the BAM or liquidating unpromising villages. After all, there are people of action who have shown themselves as such: directors of factories that work better than others, chairmen of successfully functioning collective farms or directors of such state farms. So they can be trusted to guide the economy.

To survive and become viable again, Russia needs to find answers to a number of difficult questions. Here is some of them.

**First:** The people must take power into their own hands. Now he is giving it away in the elections, and to people completely unknown to him. The current electoral system has shown its complete inadequacy. People stood on the streets in front of the candidates'

programs, and I heard the same words: "We don't know any of them!" Who won? Those who knew how to write a more attractive program, who could get more time on television, could put more agitators in underground passages, find more people to rip off competitors' flyers. Those. the selection was based on qualities that did not at all guarantee a qualified solution of state issues. As a result, we got the leadership of Russia, not only indifferent, but very sympathetically observing its disintegration. Some travel around the country promising any regions any independence - although such a question could only be resolved by the Supreme Soviet or even a plebiscite of the entire country. Others conclude an agreement with the neighboring, already independent republic, according to which oil and gas produced in Russia are sold at prices ten times lower than world prices. One gets the impression that they are carried away by this impulse of disintegration, willingly cooperating with it, they simply forgot about the interests of Russia, just as the apparatus that ruled earlier forgot.

We must find another way to reveal the will of the people. We need to choose a person who is already known for his deeds - on the basis of his deeds, not promises. The concrete form of elections must be sought, starting better with the elections of the lowest power - the regional councils. There are many possibilities here. After all, elections are, in fact, one of the types of studying public opinion, and a lot of methods for such a study have been invented.

**Second:** We must gain control over our brains. The human brain works on the basis of incoming information. And what information to give us is up to the mass media, which is not controlled by the people in any way. There, everything is decided by people whom we did not choose, who do not report to us. It is absurd to say that market relations are at work here - this is simply impossible on radio and television (and even with the freest market there are laws against monopolies). It is time to admit that, like the army, the media is too much of a force to be entirely entrusted to specialists alone. They are often referred to as the "fourth estate". - along with legislative, executive and judicial. Then they must be controlled in the same way as the other three powers. For example, along with judges, select media control committees,

**Third:** We must determine what kind of state we live in. Now the RSFSR, judging by the letter F, is a federation - but why? Yugoslavia is a federation of six republics, the FRG (before unification) - ten lands. In the current Constitution, it is only indicated which autonomous republics, regions and territories are part of the RSFSR. And the rest of the territory inhabited by Russians has been passed over in silence as something that it would be more appropriate not to talk about. This is very typical of the situation of Russians in the USSR. Russia may not be a federation at all - then a mechanism for the protection and development of its constituent peoples should be developed. Or it can be a federation of states (regions, provinces), approximately equal in population and economic potential, with broad but clearly defined rights of local authorities.

And there are many such questions before us. The XX century turned out to be a century of defeat for the Russians, the same as the XIII. The ties connecting individuals to a nation have weakened. The Russians seem to have forgotten how to unite for a

common cause. How many wonderful, sacrificial young people there are who are ready to work to protect old buildings, restore churches, and create Sunday schools. But most of the emerging Russian organizations quickly disintegrated due to lack of understanding and clash of pride. We must re-learn what our ancestors were so good at: sacrifice personal interests and pride for the sake of a common cause, painstakingly, albeit in small steps, not being afraid of failures, create a Russian movement, mutual understanding and unanimity, and re-cultivate Russian power. We once overcame the Mongol yoke, and now we will be able to repeat the work of Ivan Kalita.

Bulgakov said that "manuscripts do not burn." Moreover, readiness for self-sacrifice, a state-building gift, love for the Motherland do not disappear. The Russians knew how to rise after the Troubles, and after the burning of Moscow, and when the enemy reached the Volga. The people of Pushkin, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, the people who defeated Napoleon and Hitler, are able to find the strength to overcome the troubles that have befallen them now - even if it took them several generations for this.

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